

seance (Dec. 15th 1937) two appeals asking the X family to reveal their identities have been published. The first was published in *Light* for Jan. 1949, and as this appeal was only a letter in 'Correspondence' it had limited impact on the casual reader. The second appeal, in Paul Tabori's biography of Harry Price (1950) would have had greater impact, but of course few members of the general public are interested in Psychical Research. In any case Mr X., described as a well-known business man, would most certainly think twice before he revealed to the public that he was involved in paranormal phenomena.

D. COHEN

The Crisis in Parapsychology

SIR,—Allow me to reply to Mr Zorab's review of my English book *The Crisis in Parapsychology: Stagnation or Progress?* (*Journal*, Sept. 1965).

1. The emotional tone: The grave indignation of all real parapsychologists at the formidable denigration of so famous an English scientist as Sir William Crookes, a founder of modern Parapsychology, and his medium Florence Cook, is a very natural reaction; such unfounded denigration is quite beyond the pale in any academic-scientific debate.

2. My survey of the development of Parapsychology over nearly 100 years gives a picture which has been deplored by many serious researchers, such as Professors Murphy, Thouless, Ducasse, etc., whose verdicts I have collected under the title *Self-Criticism of Modern Parapsychology*. A cardinal point is that the failure to investigate physical-biological phenomena and mediums has led to a 'Crisis', demonstrated by the tendency to deny them and to calumniate the great founders and pioneers of Parapsychology in a most evil manner. It is most deplorable that persons without any experience of this field (and therefore incompetent to pass judgment) should discredit the experts and deny their competence, without any desire to learn from them! Thus Mr Zorab, whom, as a person, I appreciate highly, believes himself 'unbiased' and me 'so partial, so much limited by heavy blinkers, that my judgment in these matters is very much a question of doubt'.

3. Mr Zorab's suggestion that I have never heard of 'fraudulent physical mediums' is surely a joke! My experiences, over the past thirty-four years, with about seventeen mediums, twelve of whom were physical-biological ones, were always positive, because I very soon made the necessary inner contact with them, and thus obtained their confidence; which resulted in the production of

excellent phenomena. My aim was methodical experimentation upon the anatomical, physiological, and psychological-mental constitution of materialized phantoms, and upon their floating, materialization, de- and re-materialization before our very eyes. In these experiments I was assisted by several physicians and other academicians, and we took photographs (partly infrared) and tape-recordings. I heartily wish that Dr Dingwall and Mr Zorab had the good luck to have only a part of my experiences.

4. Margery's thumb-print 'fraud': both Dr Dingwall and Mr Zorab are completely mistaken. This excellent medium who was able to produce, with the help of the phantom of her brother, Walter, the fingerprints of the living Sir Oliver Lodge in England, in the seance room at Boston, was also able to produce the fingerprints of her dental surgeon (whether he was present or not) and these ideoplastically contaminated other prints. One must study the classical investigation of Brackett Thorogood, in the *Proceedings* of the A.S.P.R., Vol. 22, and the supplement about Sir Oliver Lodge's fingerprints.

5. The term 'sterility' (meaning 'unproductiveness') is generally used for every society or person which/who in spite of a long endeavour has never been able to reach definite aims or conclusions (in our case, of course, conclusions regarding mediums, and owing to the hindering influence of eternal doubts and 'fraud-complex'). All my 'attacks' are exclusively *defences* against grave attacks upon the truth, and are provoked especially by those aggressors who have represented Crookes as a moral and scientific gangster. If a researcher's errors indicate a failure of objectivity, it becomes necessary to explain his whole psychological attitude.

6. My criticism of the S.P.R.'s neutral attitude as a body: A pioneer Society which would conquer a new area of science must, from year to year, with strong consistency, step by step, establish 'facts' and systematize them—'The reality of materialization is beyond dispute'. All right: And that because of the many excellent researchers and mediums who have proved it for about 100 years. Mr Zorab ought to study the great literature in all languages, and dare to experiment himself in this field! 'Human survival after death is a scientifically proved fact!' Yet Mr Zorab again joking in a very earnest matter should know from my books that I take a strongly neutral position concerning the interpretation of materializations, separating the establishment of facts from their explanation by hypotheses, the decision between which is free to every one according to his philosophical or religious standpoint. Yet Mr Zorab consistently ignores my distinct declarations.

7. My desire is indeed that the Editor of the *Journal* should

refuse 'bad' papers, ones damaging progress, and only publish 'good' ones, which further it. Then Mr Zorab adds a new joke: claiming that in my proposed 'International Parapsychological Union' all Societies would be bound to authoritative verdicts of dictatorial character as to which facts have to be accepted as true, and which as false. A most horrible prospect! General hearty laughter should be added here! The need for free inter-changing of thoughts on all facts and problems is so self-evident that one should not waste a word about it. Yet: If there is inter-changing for 100 years without any result, and eternal 'keen scepticism' and doubt by the inexperienced against all experts, then we have the *stagnation* of today—with despair about the future!

8. Now at the end, one deciding point: What is the rule and purpose of a review at all? Obviously the reader should be informed about the contents of a book; best chapter by chapter, and the reviewer has the right to criticize as far as he is competent to do so. Yet how would he be able to criticize the expert if he himself is inexperienced? Bias and tendentiousness cannot help him! Mr Zorab curiously avoids on principle or completely forgets about referring to *all* the other contents of the book. Nothing is said about the detailed refutation of all arguments in Mr Hall's book against Crookes, nothing about the insertions regarding transfiguration, ideoplasty and double, telepathy and materialization. No mention about the excellent sittings of famous, especially German researchers with Florence in the absence of Crookes, or about the 52 pictures, 14 of which are of Katie King; nothing about system and ideology of Parapsychology, the critiques of five Journals, the reform of Parapsychology, the literary criticism, the 'legitimation' of the author to be competent to speak and write about physical-biological phenomena as an expert. The reader is not to know the real contents of the book, but to be deterred from reading it. Therefore I must ask that either all my criticisms be refuted as errors in a convincing manner, or else acknowledged, at least most of them.

HANS GERLOFF

Croiset the Clairvoyant

SIR,—In G. Zorab's review of J. H. Pollack's *Croiset the Clairvoyant* (*Journal*, December 1965) we feel some misjudgment might be present. Of course, Mr Zorab has the right to criticize this book as best he might, but his mentioning of Dr F. Brink's and Commissioner Mr Th. Roosmalen's activities in their attempts to discard some results of Gerard Croiset and Professor W. H. C.